1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

choking the sleeper. The two then pull the struggling man toward them, pick him up and carry him to a safe place in the jungle. The one who had crawled into the camp returns and lies beside the man's wives, with whom he is supposed to copulate in the perfect killing.

The other magician, meanwhile, opens the left side of the man, who is now presumed to be in a dead faint, slits the skin between two ribs, somewhat below the heart, and pulls the two ribs back. He covers his arm and hand with orchid juice[3] and places a small sharpened hardwood stick in his palm with the sharpened end in his fingers. The victim is breathing heavily; when he inhales the magician pushes his hand upward between the ribs, when he exhales the magician holds his hand. When the sorcerer reaches the heart he thrusts the killing stick into it and withdraws it and from the body.

The victim's body is moved so that the trunk is leaning down, and the head is allowed to fall into a paper-bark receptacle or a waterproof basket. When the heart stops beating the soul is let out; in native thinking the heart's blood is different from the body's blood, the home of the soul being in the heart. The basket of blood is hidden some distance away. The magician returns, puts the ribs in place, and smooths the flesh upon them. He builds a small fire, heats his spear-thrower in it, and rubs it against the wound. Previous to the killing he has gathered a nest of green ants and a small lizard, which are mashed together. The juice is taken from them and rubbed on the wound. The heating and rubbing continue until the opening is completely closed and all traces of the wound are gone.

The magician turns the body on its face. The large intestine protrudes several feet because of the magical death. A few green ants are shaken on the cut. They bite the flesh and the intestine retreats within the hole much like a snake.

The spear-thrower is then dipped in the heart's blood and whirled around the victim's head. The body quivers. The weapon is once more dipped into the heart's blood and waved again. He breathes heavily. The operation is repeated several times until the man who lost his soul breathes as before the magical "killing."

The operator now lies down on the head and tells him he will not remember what has happened to him. He is ordered to open his mouth

[3] An orchid bulb, green ants, and sometimes a lizard are collected preparatory to a killing. The juice of the bulb is rubbed on the operating arm. The green ants and lizard are used to bite the intestine to make it withdraw or to bite a wound and cause it to close; sometimes ointments for the same purposes are made of the ants and of the lizard.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

squatting position with her buttocks on her heels. The basket or bark receptacle has been placed under her vagina and the blood is allowed to flow into the basket. Sometimes a large blue fly is put inside her and allowed to come out her mouth; it flies off with her soul, which becomes the creature and familiar of the magician. After the heart has been punctured and the soul released, the same process of alternating the hot spear-thrower and the green ant and lizard ointment is followed, and the hole in the uterus and the outer wound are closed. The large intestine protrudes. She is turned over on her face to be given the same treatment as in the case of the man. When it has disappeared the spear-thrower once more is dipped in blood and whirled around the head, the same procedure being followed as with the man, until the female victim has recovered her senses and is told when she will die and that she will not be able to tell anyone what has happened to her. He cuts her in two a number of times on her way back to camp. She lives her allotted number of days and then, on the day set, she dies.

Other times the sorcerer sneaks up on a man while he is asleep and bites his nasal bone. This closes the nose and makes the man open his mouth. He takes a deep breath of air, which opens his heart, where everybody's life is. His soul comes out with the breath and goes down the doctor's mouth. He swallows it. The magician, with the aid of his helpers, then takes the man out into the bush and finishes the magical treatment ordinarily associated with soul-stealing.

Individuality and Social Personality of the Sorcerer

Individually the sorcerer is not different from the ordinary man in the community. He participates in the culture and in the daily round of affairs exactly like other men.

His difference from the average man lies in his having a special power. There were a large number of these soul-stealers in the southern and western parts of the Murngin country. Among them was Dulperro, who was credited with killing seven men and one woman; a number of expeditions had been sent out to spear him, but they had not killed him, although one succeeded in wounding him badly. Laindjura, from Marunga Island, was another outstanding killer; several of his case histories will be presented later. Goonga, of the Burera, was also a famous killer with sinister reputation. All of these men were taught by their fathers or maternal uncles how "to kill a man and make him alive to die." The black magician always gains his

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

him by magic with the fish spear but he was in the jungle looking for fresh water. I went down to the well. He had started to clean the sting-ray. I sat down beside him and helped him. When the cleaning was finished he gave me some of the fish. I stood up. While I stood there I thought, 'I'll get him now.'

"I grabbed him. He fought and fought. He tried to get away. I held his arms. I put a hand down on his scrotum and pulled it. This broke the strings holding it. He fell down. I looked around for an orchid to cover my hands and arms but I found another tree, barlk barlk.

"I opened him at the shoulder bone because I was in a hurry. I took the spear-thrower and broke the flesh where the bone meets the shoulder on the left side and pushed my hands in until I felt his heart. [There is a belief among the Murngin that the throat and heart have direct connection and that the heart inhales and exhales breath through the throat.]

"I stuck the heart with my killing stick and pulled the stick out and held the body at the waist with the head and trunk down. The blood came very quickly, and then slowly until it stopped. I swallowed his soul. I closed up the wound I had made with ants and the spear-thrower as I told you before. I took my killing stick and stuck a necklace of marks all around his neck because he was Dua. This was to make him like a flying fox hanging from a tree. I mixed up grease from my nose and sweat from my arms and rubbed these holes and shut them up. I rubbed blood then on my spear-thrower and whirled it. He turned a little.

"I then turned him over and fixed his large intestine. I got a large nest of green ants and scattered them on the large intestine. I did this four times.

"I then carried the basket of blood and hid it away. I took a little out with the spear-thrower. I rubbed it on the spear-thrower and hit him on the head and twisted his tongue. I pulled his eyelashes, fingers and toes. I told him for two days he would be alive and the third day he would die.

" 'Come in,' he said, 'we'll cook this sting ray and eat it.'

"I said, 'You have been asleep and left me all the work to do.'

"He said, 'Yes, I have been in a very deep sleep.'

"He didn't eat and went home. I came the other way. He slept that night. Next day he went out fishing and got some oysters. He went another day. Next day he tied his chest and head up with a curing string. He was sick. He died without eating, in the middle of the night."

Other Varieties of Magic

In addition to the ordinary soul-stealing there are several other varieties of magic found among the Murngin. Among them are projection of foreign objects into the victim (see under white magic), image magic, singing magic, possession by an evil spirit, and dream magic.

Image magic (bidji).—This can be performed by anyone. The per-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

754 to attempt to have anyone sing it for me, since it was too dangerous and would be likely to kill me. This was said even by the men who were willing and anxious to demonstrate the sorcery which removed the soul by the opening of the heart.

If a man who has sung another suddenly changes his mind and wishes to save him, he can swim out into the water at daylight, wash himself, return to the shore, and paint himself with red ocher. But it is insisted that if the singer did not swim and paint himself his victim would surely die. According to the natives the far-off country to the south is where all the people sing this death magic against the men of the north. This region to the south is no definite place. It is here "that stones walk like men." "These stones walk around and sing these songs, and men follow and listen and learn them and sing them and make the men in the north sick."

One of the most deadly songs is the whitefish song. The breath of its victim comes rapidly and very hard, which means that the fish has eaten out the insides of the person. The tide regulates the time of the death. When it comes in, the victim becomes extremely ill, his heart beats very fast, and everyone says, "Who has done this and who has sung this song?" When the tide goes out again, the person becomes a little stronger, and when it has reached its lowest ebb he feels almost normal. As the tide comes in the victim becomes sicker and continues to grow weaker until at full tide he dies.

753 754 Balliman's sister was very ill with bronchial pneumonia. Everyone knew she had been "sung" by the whitefish song because she continued to expectorate and vomit. When she became sick the tide was well in; when it went out she got better. Ultimately, in spite of this extremely strong magic, she recovered. During the crisis there was talk about everyone's being forced to go in swimming in order that the old men could see who had done the singing by observing those who refused to go in: they would be guilty. Nothing came of the talk. Although the woman was supposed to die from this powerful magic and everyone was certain she had been sung, there seemed to be no criticism of the belief after it had failed to operate.

826 828 732 *Possession by a Mokoi.*—The Murngin believe that deafness, dumbness, and insanity are due to possession of the afflicted one by a mokoi. Other illnesses are also caused by the entrance of a mokoi into the head of the victim. There were two deaf and dumb men in the group, one of them a near imbecile, the other mentally normal. The first had to be watched and taken care of by all the others in order to remain

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

alive, while the second provided for himself and was treated like any other man except that he talked and was spoken to by a sign language. The relatives of these two assume that mokois had entered their heads and that some day they would be led out into the bush, where someone would steal their souls, for "plenty of crazy men have been killed that way." It is thought that when these men were babies a dog had walked over the body of the more normal one a few times but had then been kicked out of the way; while the dog had walked over the other one several times, thus making him much more insane. "That one [the normal one]," said his brother, "when he was a baby a dog walked over him once and maybe twice. That made it so he couldn't hear or talk. I think that other one had a dog walk over him five or six times before his mother kicked that dog. I think that when the mother of that first boy kicked that dog he yelped and that is the reason he is not silly like that other crazy man. That other dog just went 'Unh' and didn't call out, and that is the reason his head is no good." 826 828 732

Image Whipping.—Another form of magic is to draw an image and then go over the whole of the body, naming each part and using the name of the intended victim. The image is then whipped with strings. This will cause a man's body to rot to pieces, and it is supposed to have killed several men among the various tribes in northeastern Arnhem Land. 754

Dreaming and Magic.—A bad dream can also cause sickness. Dreams of an open grave, of a recently dead man, or of the totemic emblem are among those which cause a man to rise from his sleep, build up his fire, put a branch of green leaves in the fire until it is smoking, brush himself off, and, if it seems to have been a particularly unpleasant dream, brush off the members of his immediate family. 753 787 751

Excretion and Magic.—There is a certain amount of fear among the Murngin that excreta or waste food products will be picked up by an enemy sorcerer and used to inflict sickness upon them. The belief, however, is not very strong, since no great care is exercised to hide this matter so that it cannot be used by the sorcerers. A man, however, before urinating or defecating, digs a hole and squats over it. He is seldom seen standing while urinating. Women squat too, but when in the bush put their hands on their knees and bend their knees slightly while remaining partially upright. 754 514

If there is a particular fear of magic, fish bones, kangaroo bones, 754

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

leader felt that all the clan had been endangered by this profaneness and that they might all become ill.

At other times the lack of participation in sexual intercourse will cause sickness to the man who fails and possibly to others in a group. Sometimes young and bashful men refuse to enter into the ritualistic sexual intercourse which ends the Gunabibi. It is believed that they will be sick. In his account of his first participation in the Gunabibi old Dorng said the following about his embarrassment: "My brother [distant] said to me at this time, 'You go play with my wife.' I said, 'No.' He said, 'You will be sick and maybe die if you don't play with her.'" Often the women who are to be the sexual partners of young men send word to the men that they must come and stay with them or that the young man's refusal will cause both partners to be ill.

Sometimes improper participation in a ceremony will also cause illness. Willidjungo, the medicine man, diagnosed my lame leg as caused by my not seeing all of a certain Gunabibi ceremony, which had caused the great snake to be sorry and angry with me. This diagnosis occurred in similar cases with several of the natives.

Mistreatment of ceremonial objects connected with the celebration of a great ritual can also cause illnesses. During the Gunabibi some of the feather headpieces of the leader, Ilkara, disappeared and from the indications left it appeared that a wildcat had eaten them. The young men supposed to guard these things and remain on the ceremonial ground during the night had failed in their duty. Ilkara became ill and had to have a doctor remove a large bone from his side which appeared because of this neglect of his totemic paraphernalia.

Baldness is a term of reproach among the Murngin. A man who becomes bald considers it a calamity. One man among the group was partially bald. His people believed that his condition was due to his making too many totemic emblems and giving them to other men in return for presents; in other words, he was mistreating his totem. There was no evidence that he traded his totemic emblems any more frequently than did any of the other men of the group.

Women sometimes suffer innocently from the power of the ceremonial blood smeared on the men during the Djungguan and Gunabibi ceremonies. Dundir's leg had two small infections about the size of a thumb nail. Her husband said that she could not go hunting for grubs because she was ill. "She picked cotton off me over at Rabuma when

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

we circumcised those young men. That blood made her sick." One old man spoke up and said, "That blood made her sick. It makes women ill when they touch us after the Djungguan. It is the spirit in that blood that does this. It is the totem, not the wooden emblem, but the spirit inside with the power name. He is in that blood. A woman cannot touch it or it will make her sick."

Smaller rituals are performed by two or three individuals to cure someone who is ailing. Frequently women rub red ocher over their bodies because of an ailment, this being but an abbreviation of its use in the larger ceremonies. Red ocher string is tied around the head or body to cure a headache or abdominal pain. This act, too, is but a shortening of the ritual in which decorated string is placed around the head or body in the larger ceremonies.

Larger rituals are definitely used to remove pain. Certain parts of the Djungguan are designed to take away the pain from the boy who is being circumcised. The women relatives whip themselves in order to transfer the pain from the boy to themselves. The head of the boy's penis, they also say, is a turtle's head, so the cutting of the foreskin cannot hurt him since it is not his flesh being cut but that of the animal. These statements are also supposed to remove the pain from the boy.

Other rituals, which assure success in war, are demonstrably only elaborated magical practices. The gaingar spears represent the head of the Dua and Yiritja moieties. The souls of the dead of the moieties are supposed to be in each weapon. The ceremonial throwing of the spears to assure the killing of an enemy and to prevent the killing of their own men is definitely of a magical nature, the power of these ceremonies depending upon the souls' clustering around the spear just as the power of the magical killing stick depends upon the souls which cluster about its point.

The bone magic ceremony used in the maringo fighting (see Chapter VI, Warfare) is also an elaborate ceremony focused upon the magical idea of the soul's being associated with a bone relic. In earlier parts of this chapter the individual treats the bone in a ceremonial way to practice his magic against his enemies. Both the gaingar and the maringo ceremony from one point of view are elaborate magical practices participated in by the group and led by the ceremonial or war leader.

All the rituals, particularly the Narra, which celebrates the ascendancy of the clan totem, are commonly used to purify the group of

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

Several men proudly exhibit their arms which show five and six cuts that have been made during previous ceremonies.

The man who gives his blood for the first time is considered to be in a dangerous position. This is one of the reasons, the old men say, why he is played over. "That man who gives his blood for the first time for Yurlunggur might get killed. That is why we play over him. That blood comes straight from his heart to his arm when it runs out. That is why we tie it at the top or it might all run out. The boy might get killed because his soul is in his heart and the blood comes from there for corroborees." "It is blood [man-gu] which makes people strong all their lives; if a man's blood runs out and he is emptied of all his blood that man dies and his soul is gone. We got this body because we have that blood. If that blood goes away we are empty inside."

It is believed that this blood, when it is on a man's body as a part of his decoration for the ceremony, if touched by a woman will make her ill or produce sores on her body, because it has had a totemic name given it and the essence of the totemic spirit has gone inside this blood. The blood of a man who has been hurt in an ordinary accident will not hurt a woman. She can rub against him and be all right. "The blood that hurts a woman is the spirit of the Wongar that is inside that blood. It has a big [sacred] name that the leader sang when the men cut their arms. The spirit that is inside that blood is not just that wooden trumpet but another one more inside [more sacred] and the totemic spirit itself, Yurlunggur.—That blood that man gives in the Djungguan is Wongar Derpal. [Derpal means magically powerful and strong.] That blood the old man gives to the dance people makes them derpal and it makes their feathers and bush cotton derpal. The meaning is like this: suppose you and I have come a long way and we reach a good camp and our people have one house empty and it is a good place for us and they take us and put us in it. We get in that house and have a good sleep and no one can hurt us because we have friends. That blood is just like that. It makes us feel easy and comfortable and it makes us strong. It makes us good. That derpal is like the head man. We have that derpal from that blood. It is in our body. It goes inside when we put that blood on it. That blood makes a very big thing."

The night of the day following the bloodletting, the procedure in the main camp is changed. The old women start the evening's per-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

852 796 formance by wailing and dancing around the warngaitja. The men enter the camp, the boys on their backs now covered with bundles of bushes and leaves. The boys are placed on the ground under the pile of bushes by the warngaitja poles. The men stand with spears around them. The song ends. The men snatch the warngaitja from out of the ground, take the two boys, and run away into the men's ground. The women follow them singing flood water, stop at the edge of the men's grounds and return to the center of the camp, while the men continue on to the fire circle.

852 796 773 826 *Native Interpretation.*—The blood that runs from an incision and with which the dancers paint themselves and their emblems is something more than a man's blood—it is the menses of the old Wawilak women. I was told during a ceremony: "That blood we put all over those men is all the same as the blood that came from that old woman's vagina. It isn't the blood of those men any more because it has been sung over and made strong. The hole in the man's arm isn't that hole any more. It is all the same as the vagina of that old woman that had blood coming out of it. This is the blood that snake smelled when he was in the Mirrirmina well. This is true for Djungguan and Gunabibi."—"When a man has got blood on him [is ceremonially decorated with it], he is all the same as those two old women when they had blood. All the animals ran away and they couldn't cook them."

When the trumpet blows over the man giving his blood, it is Yurlunggur risen out of his well to swallow the women and their two children because he has smelled the menstrual blood of the older sister. Several well-informed men told me, "When Yurlunggur blows over them when they cut their arms it is like that snake comes up and smells that woman's blood when he is getting ready to swallow them." The songs sung refer to the profanement of the pool and the swallowing of the women by the snake, which means that the man who is giving his blood for the first time is being swallowed by the snake and is at the moment the old woman.

The first *giving* of blood was made by the Wawilak sisters themselves, since it was the blood from their heads and those of their children which was first used by man. "When the Wongar men [who came after the women had been swallowed] looked closely at the stone, they found blood from the heads of the two women and boys [where the snake had bitten them; see myth, subdivision 6]. 'What

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

will we do?' 'Run and get some paper bark and make a panikin out of it.'" 852

"They tied up two panikins and put the blood in them and went to the ceremonial grounds. 796 773

"Take all the bird feathers and we will paint ourselves. You do this and I will go and cut Yurlunggur." 826

It is only the men's blood that is of the right quality for use in the Djungguan ceremony. Women's blood cannot be used. "Woman's and man's blood are just the same but woman's blood is no good. Wongar would not allow it to be used. He will only take men's blood." The blood is not only the menstrual blood of the women in the eyes of the old men; "That blood, that old woman's blood that ran out here [informant pointed to his pudenda], that blood is a live Wongar's blood too. He [the man who was giving the blood] does that for Wongar too. They blow that trumpet over him [the blood-giver] because the snake came out and smelled that woman's blood when she went after paper bark." These last statements were made within the totemic camp of the old men while they and I watched the young man who gave his blood for the first time.

When "Djili-djili-la" is sung after "blood" and "Yurlunggur," it, in singing form, "is just the same as when the snake comes out the first time," by which the various men who told me this meant "when Yurlunggur comes out" as described in Section C. In other words, these two parts of the ceremony are equivalent.—The next song, "Earthquake," was interpreted: "Those two women came to that place [Mirrirmina]. Yurlunggur smelled them and turned over and moved the ground." Whenever an earthquake occurs in Murngin country it is always said that Bapa Indi (Yurlunggur or Muit) is moving in the subterranean waters.—When the next song, "Snake's Tongue" was sung, a leader of one of the Djungguan said, "Those two women try to stop that snake's tongue. He wanted to swallow them. That is what this means. They gave his tongue an inside [sacred] name." Another man said, "When that trumpet blows he is singing out and asking, 'Which one has got strong blood?' It is like he is choosing the man he wants. When he gets that man he plays all over him just like he was licking him. He did those two Wongar women that way before he swallowed them. This makes the man's blood come out quick and easy."—After the next song, "Dua Lightning," the leader of one of the ceremonies said, "That is the forked tongue of the snake. Storms and thunder come from him. That is

852 796 773 533 [823]

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
O117 Murngin O117

sume a dominant rôle in any of its corporate activities. He can become initiated into its cult "mysteries," certain aspects can be revealed to him; but, however much he may know about these, he remains virtually an outsider. 602 611

A man's submerged association with the mother's line of descent may be viewed in terms of mutual aid. It is described in the following way. A man's bones are made from seminal fluid, his flesh from his mother's blood. A male of one moiety and a female of the other have combined in mutual "work" (i.e., *djama*, "work," sexual intercourse) and through their efforts formed the fetus. Because of his bones, the enduring part of his physical body, and because of the patri-ancestor who animated his fetus, a man may be acknowledged a member of his patri-line. But because his mother gave him his flesh, so to speak, he has some connection with her patri-line. Because he has only flesh from her, he cannot handle the sacred emblem poles of her patri-line. But his bones are really his father's *babaru* sacred poles; and because of this, and because of his ancestor's spirit, he attains full status in his father's patri-line. Because his mother co-operated with his father in bringing about his birth, because she added something to his physical being, he must always assist in the ceremonies of his mother's patri-line. When men perform on their sacred ground, those of the opposite moiety aid them in minor dancing, in singing, in calling invocations. But they may never handle the sacred emblems, never impersonate their ancestors; the cloak of spiritual sacredness may never descend upon them. A parallel with the Nuba may be drawn here (Nadel 1947:213). 602 611 842 [826] [616] [171]

Within the mother's patri-line one finds relationships such as *momo*, NGADI, GALWAL, *yandi*, GALEI, *galei*; intimacy with the females with the *galei*, sexual intimacy, with the *yandi* and *momo*, freedom of expression, lack of constraint; formal constraint with the males, GALEI, NGADI and GALWAL. There too, ideally speaking, are the M.Bros. of each generation of males of the patri-line. This is EGO's avunculine; its importance to EGO depends on the importance of the M.B. 602 611

E. *MARI-GU'DARA Line of Inheritance.* The third line of descent is of a different nature: it signifies EGO's descent or inheritance through females to the third ascendant generation level, headed by a male, linking EGO with the patri-line of his m.m. This is not the "matrilineal descent line" spoken of by Radcliffe-Brown, when a man is followed by his Sr.S. Murdock (1949:15, 44) and Herskovits (1949:290), for example, have given us definitions relating to matrilineal descent. Do these conform with what we find among the Wulamba? First, we may observe that this "descent line" cutting diagonally across the structure of the system does not mean that EGO is assigned exclusively to that group (consisting of all females of that line and their male siblings); i.e., it does not assign a person to his mother's kin group. If the latter were inferred, this would mean that EGO would be affiliated with female and male members of both his mother's patri- and matri-lines. Now we may be prepared to say that by matrilineal descent we mean that a person belongs to his mother's "family," but that for purposes of inheritance and succession this is traced 611

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
O117 Murngin O117

the mound piled beside the *ba'uma*. When the Wauwalak actors see the Snake, they act as if "they are shamed", here termed *g(w)o:ra'nganbingambi*. They are "shamed" because they have the child, and their blood is running.[9]

When this dance is over, two *dua* men bring out a pole from the darkness of the bush beside the sacred ground, and hold it horizontally, waist-high from the ground, on the concave side of the *ba'uma*. Within the crescent trench lie the young boys, and on the opposite (the convex, though sometimes on the concave) side of the *ba'uma* the *jelmalandji* stand, held by two men. Then, to the ritual crying of all participants, the *jelmalandji* are pushed over so that they hit the pole and tumble to the ground. They are picked up, and pushed over again; this is repeated several times, until the feathered ornaments on top of the *jelmalandji* fall off. The Julunggul are falling over, after swallowing the Wauwalak.

Then the young boys are removed from the *ba'uma* and placed on the mound beside it, while the *jelmalandji* are put in their place. Fire-sticks are thrown into the *ba'uma*, to burn the grass and paperbark surrounding the central poles of the *jelmalandji*. At the same time men open their arm veins, sprinkling blood on one another and into the trench; this is the blood of the Wauwalak, and blood itself symbolizes life. Rows of dancing men come down the sacred ground and along the shallow trench, to and around the *ba'uma*, pushing the mound into the trench and gradually filling the hole, until the earth from dancing feet covers the *jelmalandji*, and the ground is flattened "so that no one will see that trench".

This completes the main section of the Kunapipi: the sequence of these rituals may be changed according to the inclination of the totemic leaders, or some may be omitted.

* * * *

This is followed by two concluding features: the ceremonial exchange of wives, and the return of the young boys into secular camp life. The latter always takes place at Yirrkalla; but local aborigines say that the former is less common, and it does not seem to be well integrated with indigenous social behaviour. Mission pressure has been brought to bear, in recent years, on the performance of the Kunapipi, and especially on ceremonial intercourse; but it is still practised at Milingimbi and Rose River, and away from white supervision on the settlements.

In other parts of the Territory where Kunapipi holds sway, and where "Big Sunday" is an integral part of native religious life, ceremonial copulation brings these rituals to a climax. It represents a

9. The word "shame" signifies "shyness", the normal feeling a menstruating woman feels towards a man who observes her blood. The European cultural connotation is lacking in this pidgin translation of the native term.

7; Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
OI17 Murngin OI17

773 776 182 society of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, which places considerable stress on female fertility among both human beings and natural species.

On the whole, however, the Djanggawul are very much like ordinary mortals. They depend on natural resources for food and sustenance; they must walk in order to traverse the country, and use canoes to cross the sea and rivers; they enjoy the satisfaction of coitus, the warmth of the sun and of fire; they sing and perform ritual. Moreover, their super-human powers do not seem to avail them when forced to alter their direction because of a *jiritja* moiety dreaming, or to move their camp, as in the case of the *jiritja* spring water at Elcho Island; or in the case of sorcery, as when Miralaidj was killed. The myth, then, deals with Beings whose behaviour, although they are super-human, approximates that of ordinary man. The myth is correlated with a way of life that the Aborigines know and appreciate, and consequently has a greater hold on their emotions; it involves a faith of which the adherents include all members of the society. The sacred aura of the Djanggawul extends over man, woman and child, bringing them all within the sphere of its religious expression, as manifested in the songs and the ritual.

773 182 562 [826] Another feature is the segregation of the sexes when, in the myth, female children are placed under the *ngainmara* mat, and male children in the coarse grass. This reflects the Aborigine's assumption that man's rôle in life is rough, his activities are more strenuous than those of women, he takes the initiative in fighting, and altogether carries out the heavier work. His skin too is coarser, from his original exposure by the Djanggawul, while the contact with grass resulted in his growing facial hair. Women, on the other hand, were handled with greater care, protected from the harsh glare of the sun, from the rough ground and the grass. Because of this initial treatment, they are supposed to-day to be soft and yielding, with no facial and the minimum of body hair; and they are not, in theory, expected to carry out strenuous work. In reality, however, they are not the demure and submissive creatures idealized in this section of the myth. When the occasion demands, they can undertake equally difficult and strenuous activities, and possibly have greater endurance than men over a period. Nevertheless, the myth implies that they should in some measure conserve their strength to expend in sexual intercourse and childbearing. This twofold distinction between the sexes, on both physical and psychological grounds, is fundamental in local thought, with important effects on expected and actual behaviour. It is most interesting that we should find it expressed, in these terms, in a myth which purports to offer explanations of basic drives in Aboriginal society.

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 to feed her [give her to him]"; but if he is a greedy fellow he says, "No, I
584 want to keep her myself."

159 The black man's custom is different from the way white men are. A
[583] black man takes a wife when she is very young, sometimes before her
593 breasts have come. He sleeps with her, loves her, and does everything but
[826] have intercourse with her. This makes his girl want him and makes her breasts come large and start sticking out. That is before her blood comes.
[841] When blood first comes to a woman it is after she has copulated with a man for the first time. That is what causes it. She has blood a few more times, and then she has a baby, and then the blood stops.

159 If my wife gave me no children, I would go to my gawel and tell him. He
587 would say, "Wait a little while and I will give you another daughter of mine
595 so that you can have children." If my wife died, my father-in-law would give me another one right away. If he hasn't a grown daughter, he would wait until his little one got larger and then he would give that girl to me.

159 When my second wife got large enough her father and mother brought
595 her to me and said for her to stay with me and that I was her husband (pages 95-96). My first wife [the new wife's older sister] did not growl at me but kept very quiet when I was around. When I was away she growled at her little sister and told her to go on away. "Mahkarolla belongs to me and not to you." By and by my new wife told me about this. She also told her mother and father.

[626] They said to my first wife, "You must stop this quarreling with your sister. She is just the same as you. You are our daughter and she is our daughter. You have Mahkarolla for a husband, and we have given her to him and she has him for a husband. She is your young sister. You will now have someone to look out for the wood for you, and she can help you get food for your husband."

My wife kept quiet then. Those two sisters live together just like good friends. They never fight like the wives of some husbands do. They look out for each other's children.

159 When another gawel liked me he went to my proper father-in-law and
584 said, "I like that son-in-law that belongs to you. I would like to give him my daughter. He can be a son-in-law of mine, too." My gawel, because he is a good man, said, "You haven't promised that girl of yours to somebody else, have you?" If that man had said, "Yes," mine would have said, "No, you can't because that will make trouble for my son-in-law." That man said, "No," so my father-in-law said, "Yes."

159 My mother-in-law—I don't talk to her. I can't go close to her camp, can't
606 go pick up something close to her camp, can't take food from her. I can't give food to her straight; I must give it through my wife. When I am

remaining with him all night. None of the medicinemen that I met in east Arnhem Land claimed to have a single *marrngit* only, and the number varied from two to four or five or even more, as in the case of Wilindjango, who had six (Plate Jb).

The *marrngitmirri*, as he gains experience in the cult, is able to see on the body of a victim of secret killing spear wounds which are not visible to ordinary people.

As the drawings in colour in Plates I and J indicate, there is a considerable variation in the concepts of the *marrngit* entertained by the *marrngitmirri*, but all agreed that these are *wakkinngu*—profane, in the sense of non-sacred, with the special implication that they are not associated with, or dedicated to, the *wangarr*, and so not subject to ritual or supernatural sanctions. The *marrngit* and their cult are regarded, therefore, by the natives of Arnhem Land as apart altogether from totemism. This essential distinction was pointed out to me by my informants themselves. They emphasized it frequently by referring to their *marrngit* as *warrakan*—animals—a term that they never used for their totems, except in reference to the actual animal form which the totems sometimes assumed in ancestral times—for, being *wangarr*, they had supernatural powers and were not subject to the restrictions and limitations of ordinary men. They were *wangarr*, hence supernatural.

The people always described their totems as *malli wangarr*—the spirits or shades of the ancestral culture heroes—and therefore, *yarkomirri*, literally with, or having, a name, dedicated ceremonially to the *wangarr*. On ceremonial occasions the obligatory presentations of *ngata* (food) are dedicated to the *wangarr* concerned by the *dalkarramirri*, who acts in the role of high priest. And because of their association with the *wangarr*, all totems or totemic objects are subject to supernatural sanctions and are still watched over by the *malli* of these *wangarr* who guard jealously the observance of the rituals associated with the heritage that they left behind.

The demarcation between what is sacred and what is profane, between *yarkomirri* and *wakkinngu*, emphasizes the recognition by these people of the essential distinction between *marrngit* and totem, between religion and magic.

Notes

[1] The data presented in the paper were obtained when I was under commission by the Commonwealth Government in Arnhem Land, prior to the war, and during the war while O.C. Northern Territory Coastal Patrol and the Special Reconnaissance Unit, Norforce.

[2] *Oceania*, Vol. I, 1936, pp. 336–41.

[3] See Donald F. Thomson, 'Two Painted Skulls from Arnhem Land, with Notes on the Totemic Significance of the Designs.' MAN, 1939, 1.

[4] *Tertork* is heart in the strictly anatomical sense, but some of my informants declared that it was also the seat of the *malli*, or shade, a kind of non-material or spiritual manifestation, which has nothing to do with the shadow.

[p.102(B)]

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

vital organs, and it made off into the scrub. He followed the wounded animal, and in the ensuing scuffle was himself seriously wounded, and had his thigh laid open by the protruding spearhead. However, he killed the animal and cooked some of it to take back to camp, and propped the rest in the branches of a tree. When he came limping into camp, his friends saw the blood and asked what had happened. Some of them went off to get the meat, but his closest relatives said with characteristic and genuine feeling: 'We will not eat that meat; it has Marjirry's blood on it.' It was clearly a case of 'mumbakuta' and the spilt blood had to be ceremonially washed away and his body purified by washing in a totemic well. Marjirry's father began the ceremony by declaring: 'No one is to eat that meat except my son's wife and children; it is mumbakuta.' He scooped a hole in the sand resembling his horde's totemic well, and when the rest of the kangaroo arrived, the closest relatives ate it, carefully buried the bones and skin in the 'well', and lit a fire over it so that the camp-dingoes could not desecrate them.

By the end of the next week Marjirry felt better, so his father told him that he must 'wash' and that he would make him 'koota-koota', or ceremonially clean, in their totemic well. Everyone sat by the 'well' containing the buried bones and skin. After some singing and dancing, Marjirry stood over the well whilst the leader 'sang' the horde's thanks to the spirit-Ancestors for restoring him to health. Sand was poured over him, and he washed imaginary blood off his body and smeared himself with red ochre. However, before the affair could be considered finished with, Marjirry again went hunting and brought his first kill to his father, who announced that everyone could eat it, and in the ensuing meal thanked them for having observed the tabu. To break this tabu and eat the victim's food, or use his utensils, is a breach of etiquette and a violation of sacred and personal

[759]

cut. It is assumed to be worth while patching him up; his organs are pushed inside and the hot spear-thrower, bark-pulp, and clay-plaster treatment is applied.

[757] [824]

Severe constipation, with distended stomach, is known as 'o 'er wak', and for this the leaves of a dry jungle tree are mixed in water and the fluid rubbed over the body. Crushed leaves are inserted in the nostrils and piled on the chest whilst the remaining fluid is poured into the ears. It is said to be essential for the patient to remain supine, so as to allow the fluid to run from the nostrils and ears down through the spinal column into the stomach. A second method is to make a meal from a long, spiral shellfish (*Cerithium Telescopium disruptum*) found on the mudflats. It is good food at any time, but it is also reported as a cure for constipation, assisting the passage of faecal matter; it has the smoothness of the oyster and not its glutinous fibre.

[846]

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A [illegible] tree is always used for the fire. (It is the heaviest wood I have seen, and whilst it is being milled severe irritation is caused to both nose and throat.) The patient spends most of the day on the grille, and from time to time is turned over; at sundown he is removed and plunged into a nearby creek or waterhole. Most assuredly he can expect to feel stimulated.

[751] [164] [240] [824]

Diarrhoea is not a common ailment, for natural wandering habits reduce the danger of infection. Nevertheless, epidemics do occur, maybe through over-eating a good catch of turtle, or through hunger driving the food-gatherers to eat decomposing fish or meat washed ashore. A succulent herb, 'brolgill', found near fresh water swamps, is then crushed and mixed with water, and the ruby-red mixture

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Black Magic

Stone age man's credulity and dark dubiety lead to the use of magic in everyday life. Specialized workers in evil magic are called 'raggalk', but astonishing powers are also credited to many men and women who claim to make wind and rain and to bring about the deaths of enemies. Aspiring raggalk are initiated by old witch-doctors, who do it for a consideration. The pupil is asked if he wishes to do a special killing or general training in all branches of black magic.

A raggalk is said to be able to enter and spell-bind his victim at a distance. He goes to the victim's village and, when the victim is asleep, he creeps in by a previously arranged way to simplify the draining of his blood. When the victim dies, the raggalk enlarges the wound and draws out the small intestines and buries them, meantime catching the blood in a bark container. Heart-blood is kept by the raggalk to assist him in hunting and to ensure health and good luck, and when he is making totemic emblems he swallows some of it to increase his skill. Such powers come from the lesser spirit of the victim, which is trapped in the blood and can be controlled by the raggalk. Eventually however the raggalk makes the fatal mistake of relying entirely on this ghost to warn him of danger, and when a killing-party comes to avenge the death of the victim, the ghost deserts him and joins the avengers.

Raggalk say that when the blood and organs have been removed, they wash and massage the body to arrest rigor-mortis and 'soften' it before bringing it back to life. To